

# ***News Release***



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## **RECLAMATION CHANGES WATER YEAR TYPE FOR KLAMATH BASIN**

Due to reduced inflow into Upper Klamath Lake, Reclamation finds it necessary to change its forecast for the 2002 water year from a “below average” to a “dry” water year and will now track Upper Klamath Lake elevation levels and Iron Gate Dam flows for the “dry” water year type as per our final Biological Assessment (BA).

As of June 15, 2002, the inflow to Upper Klamath Lake has not been as abundant as projected by the Natural Resource Conservation Service April forecast. The projected inflows for the remaining water year added to the inflows already received are expected to result in a total inflow of 265,400 acre-feet. The lake’s surface elevation is rapidly declining at the rate of 0.04 feet per day.

For the near term, flows below Iron Gate Dam will reflect an additional 20,000 acre-feet being delivered in the furtherance of Reclamation’s Tribal Trust responsibilities for the Hoopa Valley, Karuk, and Yurok tribes but will be reduced to conserve water during this critical period. Those flow levels will still meet or exceed the flow levels required by National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion flows for a below average year. Around July 31, Reclamation proposes to decrease flows as provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion and Reclamation’s BA for the remainder of the water season, indicated in those documents for a dry water year.

Reclamation is advising project irrigation districts to make every effort to conserve water and to pass that message along to all water users. Should natural inflows to Upper Klamath Lake continue to degrade, it is probable that some reduction of deliveries will be necessary. If all water users do their part to conserve, such reductions may not be necessary.

For additional information, contact Reclamation’s Public Affairs Office at 916-978-5100 (TDD 916-978-5608).

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